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Item 67 (s) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Nuclear disarmament

Note by the Secretary-General**

1. At its fifty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 56/24 R, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", in paragraph 17 of which it requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the resolution. The present note is submitted in compliance with that request.

2. A number of initiatives have been taken at the unilateral, bilateral and multilateral levels aimed at reducing existing nuclear arsenals and at further strengthening and reinforcing the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In this context, the Secretary-General welcomes the signing of the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions by the United States of America and the Russian Federation on 24 May 2002. It is a positive step in the direction of nuclear disarmament and contributes to the fulfilment of the obligations of the two countries as nuclear-weapon States under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Such reductions should be implemented in a transparent and verifiable manner. On 27 June 2002, the leaders of the Group of Eight (G-8) nations agreed on a Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Under this initiative, the G-8 nations will support specific cooperation projects, initially in the Russian Federation, to address non-proliferation, disarmament, counter-terrorism and nuclear safety issues.

3. Arms control and disarmament agreements play an essential role in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Strengthening such agreements and thus making further progress towards nuclear disarmament require actions at all levels. Several multilateral agreements still await either entry into force or effective implementation and universality. To this end, the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was convened in New York from 11 to 13 November 2001. Its Final Declaration reaffirmed strong support for the CTBT and called for ratification of the Treaty, especially by those States whose ratification is needed for the Treaty to enter into force. The Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held its first session in New York from 8 to 19 April 2002. The States parties reaffirmed that the NPT was the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. They further recognized that in the current international climate, where security and stability continued to be challenged, both globally and regionally, by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of their means of delivery, preserving and strengthening the Treaty was vital to peace and security. The Secretary-General commends the

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** Finalization of the report was dependent on the outcome of the 2002 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

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commitment of the States parties to the effective implementation of the objectives of the Treaty, the decisions and the resolution of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, adopted by consensus.

4. Regrettably, the Conference on Disarmament continues to be unable to make full use of its potential as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body. Despite proposals made to bridge the divergent views and interests of member States, the Conference on Disarmament could not break the impasse during its 2002 session to reach an agreement on a substantive programme of work. The Secretary-General calls upon the States members of the Conference on Disarmament to renew their efforts in seeking agreement on the outstanding issues.